

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. In a computer system, a method for providing recommendations of items to a user, the method comprising:

evaluating the items in accordance with sets of parameters;  
recommending selected items to a user based on the evaluation of the items;  
receiving from the user feedback regarding the recommendations; and  
adjusting the sets of parameters based on the feedback.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the feedback from the user is in the form of user ratings of the recommendations.

3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the evaluation of the items includes determining affinity values for the items.

4. The method of Claim 1, wherein a genetic algorithm is utilized for adjusting the sets of parameters.

5. The method of Claim 1, wherein other items that have been selected by the user as favorites are utilized as references for the evaluation of the items.

6. A system for recommending items to a user, comprising:

a recommendation factory for providing the recommendations to the user, the recommendations being determined based on evaluations of the items made in accordance with sets of parameters; and

a performance monitor for receiving feedback from the user regarding the recommendations;

wherein the sets of parameters are adjusted based on the feedback from the user.

7. The system of Claim 6, further comprising an affinity predictor for calculating the expected affinity values of the items.

8. The system of Claim 7, wherein the recommendation factory selects items to be recommended in accordance with the items that have the highest expected affinity values as determined by the affinity predictor.

9. The system of Claim 6, further comprising a recommendation table to which the recommendation factory writes the recommendations, the recommendations being loaded for the user from the recommendation table.

10. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable components for providing recommendations to a user, the computer-readable medium comprising:

a recommendation component for providing the recommendations to a user;

a performance component for monitoring the performance of the recommendations;

and

a parameter component for adjusting parameters based on the performance of the recommendations.

11. The computer-readable medium of Claim 10, wherein the parameter component utilizes a genetic algorithm.

12. The computer-readable medium of Claim 11, wherein the genetic algorithm executes unworthy parameter sets based on the performance of the recommendations.

13. The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, wherein the genetic algorithm generates new parameter sets from the surviving population.

14. The computer-readable medium of Claim 10, further comprising an affinity component for calculating expected affinity values.

15. The computer-readable medium of Claim 10, further comprising a recommendation table component to which the recommendation component writes the recommendations, the recommendations being loaded for the user from the recommendation table component.

16. In a computer system, a method for providing recommendations of items to a user, the method comprising:

recommending items to a user based on evaluations of the items;

monitoring at least one aspect of the user's behavior that is related to the recommendations; and

adjusting the way in which the items are evaluated based on the at least one aspect of the user's behavior.

17. The method of Claim 16, wherein the at least one aspect of the user's behavior is the user's rating of the recommendations.

18. The method of Claim 16, wherein the evaluation of the items includes determining affinity values for the items.

19. The method of Claim 16, wherein a genetic algorithm is utilized as part of the process for adjusting the way in which the items are evaluated.

20. A system for providing recommendations to a user, the system comprising:

an affinity predictor for receiving information regarding items and determining affinity values for the items, the affinity values being determined according to sets of parameters, the affinity values being used to provide recommendations to the user; and

a parameter controller for adjusting the sets of parameters in accordance with feedback from the user regarding the recommendations.

21. The system of Claim 20, further comprising a performance monitor which harvests recommendation performance information from the user.

22. The system of Claim 20, further comprising a recommendation factory which selects items that have the highest expected affinity levels as determined by the affinity predictor.

23. The system of Claim 22, further comprising a recommendation table which the recommendation factory writes the recommendations to, the recommendations being loaded for the user from the recommendation table.

24. The system of Claim 20, wherein the parameter controller utilizes a genetic algorithm.

25. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable components for providing recommendations of items to a user, the computer-readable medium comprising:

an affinity predictor component for determining affinity values for items based on sets of parameters;

a recommendation factory component for providing recommendations to a user; and

a performance monitor component for monitoring the performance of the recommendations, the performance of the recommendations being used to adjust the sets of parameters.

26. The computer-readable medium of Claim 25, further comprising a parameter controller component which receives data from the performance monitor regarding the performance of the recommendations, and in response thereto generates sets of parameters for use by the affinity predictor.

27. The computer-readable medium of Claim 26, wherein the parameter controller component utilizes a genetic algorithm.

28. The computer-readable medium of Claim 27, wherein the genetic algorithm executes unworthy parameter sets based on the performance of the recommendations.

29. The computer-readable medium of Claim 28, wherein the genetic algorithm generates new parameter sets from the surviving population.

30. The computer-readable medium of Claim 27, wherein after a sufficient number of iterations the sets of parameters settle toward optimal values.

31. The computer-readable medium of Claim 25, further comprising an affinity predictor component for calculating the expected affinity values of items.

32. The computer-readable medium of Claim 25, further comprising a recommendation table component to which the recommendation factory writes the recommendations.